

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 007320

EXDIS

FOR UNDER SECRETARY MAW

THE FOLLOWING IS A REPEAT OF SECSTATE 007320

ACTION SEOUL INFO CINCPAC JUSMAAG KOREA 12

JANUARY 1975. QUOTE:

S E C R E T STATE 007320

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, KS

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE ROK THIRD COUNTRY PROCUREMENT OF MAJOR
MILITARY ITEMS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: A. SEOUL 02; B. STATE 1812

1. WE AGREE WITH EMBASSY ASSESSMENT THAT, GIVEN FACT THAT
ROKG INCREASINGLY BEARING ITS OWN DEFENSE COSTS AND U.S.
ASSISTANCE DECLINING, KOREANS WILL BE INCREASINGLY
INDEPENDENT IN THEIR PROCUREMENT DECISIONS. FOR OUR PART,
IN PAST SIX MONTHS WE HAVE MADE PARTICULAR EFFORT TO BE

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FORTHCOMING ON MAJOR EQUIPMENT DECISIONS REGARDING KOREA.

AS ROKG IS AWARE, OUR DECISION TO ALLOW PURCHASE OF F4D SQUADRON WAS A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT ONE. IN RESPONSE TO KOREAN REQUIREMENTS, WE ALSO WERE ABLE TO MAKE SEPARATE DECISION AUTHORIZING HARPOON FOR KOREA. WE ARE NOW IN PROCESS OF ASSESSING PRODUCTION SCHEDULE TO SEE WHETHER IT POSSIBLE TO EXPEDITE DELIVERY SCHEDULE TO MEET SECOND GENERATION PSMM DELIVERY SCHEDULE. WE ARE ALSO PREPARED TO GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO KOREAN REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL F5E'S, PENDING DOD AIRCRAFT REQUIREMENTS STUDY NOW IN LAST STAGES. WE ARE, AND HOPE TO CONTINUE, PROVIDING SUBSTANTIAL LEVELS OF ASSISTANCE.

2. OVERALL, IT IS OUR VIEW THAT WE HAVE INDEED BEEN RESPONSIVE TO KOREAN NEEDS, BOTH ON THESE MAJOR ITEMS AND ON THE LARGE NUMBER OF LESSER FMS AND COMMERCIAL CASES WHICH HAVE BEEN APPROVED. GIVEN THE APPARENT BACKGROUND TO EXOCET AND SUBMARINE DEALS, IT IS OUR IMPRESSION THAT KOREAN CHARGES OF DELAY ARE NOT JUSTIFIED BY OUR PERFORMANCE AND APPEAR A RED HERRING TO OBSCURE OTHER CONSIDERATIONS WHICH WENT INTO ROKG DECISIONS.

3. WE HAVE NO DESIRE TO DICTATE TO ROKG HOW IT COMMITS ITS OWN FUNDS. THIS IS IN FINAL ANALYSIS THEIR OWN DECISION. AT SAME TIME, WE SEE NO JUSTIFICATION FOR ROKG ACTION IN ENTERING INTO LARGE SCALE COMMERCIAL PROCUREMENT OF QUESTIONABLE MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM THIRD COUNTRY SOURCES AT A TIME WHEN WE ARE STILL PROVIDING MAJOR ASSISTANCE. DESPITE MAJOR DIFFICULTIES WE HAVE HAD WITH CONGRESS ON MAP IN GENERAL, AND KOREA IN PARTICULAR, WE STILL EXPECT THAT FY 75 LEVELS (FMS PLUS MAP) WILL BE SIGNIFICANT. HOWEVER, KOREAN DECISION TO GO AHEAD WITH PROCUREMENT OF THESE THIRD COUNTRY SYSTEMS WILL INEVITABLY CALL INTO QUESTION THE JUSTIFICATION FOR GRANT ASSISTANCE LEVELS WE ARE SEEKING AND RAISE SERIOUS CONGRESSIONAL DIFFICULTIES. WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DEFEND SITUATION IN WHICH USG PROVIDES LARGE SUMS OF ASSISTANCE FOR MUTUALLY AGREED UPON PROCUREMENT ITEMS, WHILE ROKG THEN USES ITS OWN FUNDS TO SHOP AROUND FOR ITEMS WHICH IT MAY WISH TO PROCURE FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, INCLUDING NON-MILITARY CONSIDERATIONS.

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4. OUR CONCERNS ARE AMPLIFIED BY FACT THAT WE AND ROK HAVE ESTABLISHED ELABORATE CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS INCLUDING AD HOC MILITARY SUBCOMMITTEE TO SET MILITARY PRIORITIES. FURTHER, AT LAST SCM, MND SUH WENT TO GREAT LENGTHS IN ASSURING US OF ROK INTENTIONS REGARDING U.S. PROCUREMENT AND PRIOR CONSULTATION. IN EXOCET CASE WE HAVE NEVER RECEIVED CONVINCING MILITARY RATIONALE AND IT

IS OUR IMPRESSION THAT DECISION TO GO AHEAD IS MOTIVATED ESSENTIALLY BY POLITICAL AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS. IN CASE OF BRITISH SUBMARINES, IT APPEARS SUCH PROCUREMENT WAS NOT EVEN DISCUSSED WITH US BEFORE DECISION MADE. THIS RAISES QUESTIONS AS TO SERIOUSNESS OF THE ROK APPROACH TO OUR PAST MILITARY CONSULTATIONS ON REQUIREMENT PRIORITIES.

5. YOU SHOULD DISCUSS THE ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS AT WHATEVER LEVEL OF ROKG YOU FEEL APPROPRIATE. IN MAKING ABOVE POINTS YOU MAY ALSO NOTE THAT WE ARE REVIEWING HARPOON SCHEDULE AND MAY BE ABLE TO DO BETTER IN

DELIVERY TIMES. WE WILL HAVE FIRM READING ON THIS IN MID-FEBRUARY AND WILL GIVE ROK REQUIREMENTS THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE CONSIDERATION. YOU SHOULD ALSO AGAIN POINT OUT MAJOR EFFORTS WE HAVE MADE ON OTHER PROCUREMENT DECISIONS.

6. AS APPROPRIATE YOU SHOULD ALSO EXPLAIN THAT WE REMAIN FULLY COMMITTED TO THE SECURITY OF THE ROK. PRESIDENT FORD DURING HIS NOVEMBER VISIT PERSONALLY REAFFIRMED OUR CLOSE SECURITY TIES TO ASSURE THERE IS NO MISREADING OF OUR INTENTIONS. WE ARE ALSO DETERMINED TO DO ALL WE CAN TO COMPLETE THE MODERNIZATION PROGRAM. GIVEN THE CONTEXT OF OUR CLOSE SECURITY RELATIONSHIP, WE HOPE THE ROKG WOULD NOT MOVE IN A DIRECTION WHICH COULD CAUSE SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR BOTH OF US.

UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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